

HOMER ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
MAY 20, 2015

Session 15-08, a Regular Meeting of the Homer Advisory Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Don Stead at 6:32 p.m. on May 20, 2015 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS BOS, ERICKSON, HIGHLAND, BRADLEY, STEAD, STROOZAS,  
AND VENUTI

STAFF: CITY PLANNER ABBODD  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was approved by consensus of the Commission.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The public may speak to the Planning Commission regarding matters on the agenda that are not scheduled for public hearing or plat consideration. (3 minute time limit).

Catriona Reynolds, councilmember and city resident, commented on the road designs regarding safety for bike riders, and explained the hazards to designing roads that accommodate pedestrians and bike riders on the road. Ms. Reynolds related a personal experience where she encountered a driver trying to avoid one rider and almost hit her. She wanted a more uniform road standard for the city to consider since they are also looking at more walkability for Homer. Ms. Reynolds advocated for the new standards that were employed with the repaving of Ocean Drive. She would like at minimum a standard of a shoulder on each side of the road.

Commissioner Stead provided his own experience biking on Ocean Drive with a rude driver.

Councilmember Reynolds' responded that her preferred minimum is a shoulder on each side of the road in response to Commissioner Venuti. She noted that Level 3 with a separated pathway is preferred with someone who has smaller children with them, walking or slower cyclists however studies have shown that it is safer for cyclists to travel with traffic in response to Commissioner Stroozas. In response to Chair Stead she noted that Lake Street has travel lanes on both sides of the road so is along the lines of a Level 2 design.

There were no further questions or comments.

## **RECONSIDERATION**

No items were scheduled for reconsideration.

## **ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

All items on the consent agenda are considered routine and non-controversial by the Planning Commission and are approved in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless requested by a Planning Commissioner or someone from the public, in which case the item will be moved to the regular agenda and considered in normal sequence.

A. Approval of the minutes of May 6, 2015 meeting

Chair Stead requested a motion to approve the consent agenda.

STROOZAS/BRADLEY - SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

A. Public Works Director Carey Meyer, presentation on Waddell Way Road Project

Mr. Meyer provided a brief summary and presentation to the commission on the options associated with the project in preparation of the commission making a recommendation at a future meeting of the commission.

He proceeded to note that they are recommending that the east/west portion of the project conform to the Level 4 design level for a bike/pedestrian friendly road standard with the addition of a bike lane next to the sidewalk.

Mr. Meyer noted that other design issues that are to be addressed are Street lighting, Platting and Street Name Change and how to formally adopt the proposed bike/pedestrian road standards.

Mr. Meyer would also like the Commission to offer input on the road alignment. He has provided maps with the two alignments. The differences in the options are as follows: Option B has significant utility relocations. Option A has higher property cost for Right of Way acquisition but can be offset by reselling a portion of the remaining parcel and the cabins. Option B has no resale options to recoup some costs.

Mr. Meyer responded to questions regarding the following:

- City ability to sell the cabins within a timely manner
- Cabins appearance do not reflect the interiors which are very nice
- There are 9 cabins and are all able to be relocated
- Option A intersects with Grubstake
- This will fit in with a proposed plan to offer an alternative East West Corridor from Lake Street to Main Street
- Option B intersects with Bonanza

Commissioner Highland noted that while a member of the Transportation Advisory Committee it was determined that due to the narrowness and tightly populated area of Bonanza and Grubstake it would not be appropriate to use either of those two roads within an East West Corridor. That you will have to jog down to Hazel to access a wider less populated street.

Mr. Meyer explained that Waddell Road project will offer alternative access to the post office and that the city needs another way to get east and west besides Pioneer and the Sterling Highway. He provided an example on how Hazel Avenue is used to access the Safeway and the banks. This is pointed out in the Transportation Plan as having a back door to area businesses.

City Planner Abboud stepped up to a larger map to provide illustration of what is the bigger picture and noted that these will possibly alleviate more traffic controls along Pioneer Avenue and the Sterling Highway.

Mr. Meyer additionally explained that access from the Waddell Project to Lake Street will be by stop sign but to assist traffic flow they can incorporate a right turn lane into the project at a minimal expense.

Commissioner Highland noted as an aside that the Transportation Plan was created in 2005 and it may be time, 10 years later, they review the plan seriously. She also commented that the cost is shocking and they should carefully review this cost of \$1.7 million dollars is worth the cost to save a few minutes of time.

Mr. Meyer addressed the concerns expressed from commissioners regarding the additional cost not amounting to more than several thousand dollars based on the whole project.

Several Commissioners expressed the lack of a real need to build this road, advocating for other much higher need projects such as Main Street improvements. Staff explained that the State funded this project and if the city does not use it they will lose it. The city has tried to have the funds moved to another project but the Legislature was not agreeable to that reappropriation.

Discussion ensued on the importance of using the funds as appropriated and the repercussions if the City does not, they could end up forfeiting the funds. Additionally it was pointed out by Commissioner Bradley that it does represent the city well if they apply for funding for a project then use those funds for another project. Those actions may hinder receiving funding in the future for other important projects. Part of the discussion included the inducement for this project was creating a back door to the Post Office, relief of local traffic from Pioneer Avenue and the Sterling Highway; also the need for future traffic controls at the intersection of Grubstake and Heath Street; this funding has already been accepted and must be used within a specified time period (none indicated); Main Street was a state road and the area within the project that was remediated and cleared by the State DEC office.

Commissioner Venuti commented on the discussion of traffic and transportation issues turning left in Homer and that they need more conversations.

Mr. Meyer provided a brief explanation on the next steps in the process for public comment and public hearing on the project. He thanked the Commission for their time.

## **REPORTS**

### **A. Staff Report PL 15-35, City Planner's Report**

City Planner Abboud provided a summary of his report. He noted the following:

- Removal of a plat note from Lillian Walli parcels requiring access from a different direction.
- Land in the Watershed was able to be purchased for \$3000 there are also 3 other parcels for sale for market value that do have tributaries through them and would be an asset to the preservation of their watershed.
- The City Council is gathering all they can from the reserves for the Public Safety Building
- Renaming the Cannabis Advisory Commission
- Tested for his certification and passed he now can put the letters after his name.
- Commissioners terms are expiring and the requirement to submit a written request to the City Clerk's Office requesting to be reappointed.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Testimony limited to 3 minutes per speaker. The Commission conducts Public Hearings by hearing a staff report, presentation by the applicant, hearing public testimony and then acting on the Public Hearing items- The Commission may question the public. Once the public hearing is closed the Commission cannot hear additional comments on the topic. The applicant is not held to the 3 minute time limit.

There were no items for public hearing.

## **PLAT CONSIDERATION**

There was no plat considerations scheduled.

## **PENDING BUSINESS**

### **A. Staff Report PL 15-36, Towers Ordinance**

Chair Stead read the title into the record and noted the laydown received from Mr. Kevin Dee on the Tower ordinance. He invited the City Planner to open discussion.

Mr. Abboud noted the draft of the ordinance that is further along and commented on the following items:

- Height calculations on line 43-53
- Excludes wireless communications equipment lines 100-103
- Changing the timeline to 45 days Line 201
- Typos were corrected
- Technical Review requirement
- Cluster designations
- Requiring the use of municipal owned land

Staff recommended moving the ordinance to public hearings or further review

ERICKSON/BOS - MOVE TO FORWARD THIS ORDINANCE TO PUBLIC HEARINGS.

There was a brief discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Staff Report PL 15-37, Ordinance 15-08, Site Development Standards

Chair Stead introduced and brought the item to the floor.

City Planner Abboud provided background to date on the ordinance. They had a presentation on invasive weeds and the importance of plantings. Staff recommended the commission review and discuss Lines 29/30 and 32/33 and expressed concerns regarding enforcement of weed free materials, currently there is no source of weed free gravel or fill on this part of the peninsula. This amendment to the ordinance was made by Council at the meeting.

Staff recommendations were to discuss the amendments on the record and forward to public hearing.

Commissioner Stroozas questioned the use of the word "Natural" in line 33 and opined that all vegetation is natural. He asked if it should not follow the use of the word "native" as in line 29. Chair Stead requested a motion.

ERICKSON/VENUTI - MOVE TO CHANGE "NATURAL" IN LINE 33 AND 34 TO "NATIVE" AND FORWARD FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS.

Discussion followed on the wording for legislative purposes and enforcement of the sentiment "weed free plants with no invasive species"; the time limit of nine months to re-vegetate was to protect against erosion; weeds will never be eradicated but they can minimize them.

STROOZAS/BOS (amendment) - MOVED TO AMEND LINE 29 TO DELETE THE WORD "PLANTINGS", AND AMEND LINE 30 TO DELETE "AND WEED FREE PLANTS WITH NO INVASIVE SPECIES" INSERT "OR PLANTINGS TO MINIMIZE INVASIVE SPECIES."

There was no discussion on the amendment.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Stead stated for the record that he believed the amendment talks about the enforceability by saying that they are going to attempt to get non-invasive species so that it can be a little bit more enforceable along with the native vegetation and he is not sure that this is only enforceable by

complaint. City Planner Abboud responded that they do follow-up on permits to make sure that there is compliance with the rules.

VOTE. (Main) YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Staff Report PL 15-38, Waddell Way Design

Chair Stead read the title into the record. He requested input from City Planner Abboud.

City Planner Abboud stated that since no hard answers are needed at this time that a motion is required. They spoke about the connection of the road connections. The street will have to be renamed.

Chair Stead recommended bring it to the floor with a motion to adopt and that they will start taking public comment at the June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> meeting and they will make the recommendation to council at the June 17<sup>th</sup> meeting on the four requested recommendations.

BOS/ERICKSON - MOVED TO ADOPT STAFF REPORT PL 15-38, WADDELL WAY ROAD DESIGN.

There was a brief discussion regarding the design options presented and if they would make recommendations on which options or wait until after the public comment periods; also review of road standards concerning width and shoulders, allowing the public to see the map that the city is planning for future (from the Transportation Plan).

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

#### **INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

A. City Manager's Report from May 11, 2015 City Council Meetings

There was no discussion.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

Members of the audience may address the Commission on any subject. (3 minute time limit)

There was no audience present.

#### **COMMENTS OF STAFF**

There were no comments from staff.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Stroozas commented on reading in the City Manager's report and the flyer that none of the Commissioners were invited to the Public Service Picnic on the 14<sup>th</sup> and they could have "broke bread" with the public service employees and they are getting notice after the fact.

Commissioner Venuti commented that they have their own volunteer party, interesting meeting, liked the energy, it has been interesting experience having an arm in a cast and challenged everyone to try eating, writing and operating a mouse with their left hand. Hopefully it will be off in the next week.

Commissioner Bos commented it was a good meeting tonight.

Commissioner Erickson had no comments.

Commissioner Bradley thanked the commissioners.

Commissioner Highland asked about the confidential agreement that Mr. Hawkins had to sign and the reason he would have had to sign it and the requirement of state law requiring the city to assess the condominiums as separate parcels of real property.

Commissioner Stead commented on the meeting and the unexpected lengthy discussion on Waddell Way. He noted the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting is on his birthday.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers. There is a worksession at 5:30 p.m. prior to the meeting.

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Renee Krause, CMC, Deputy City Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_